



THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

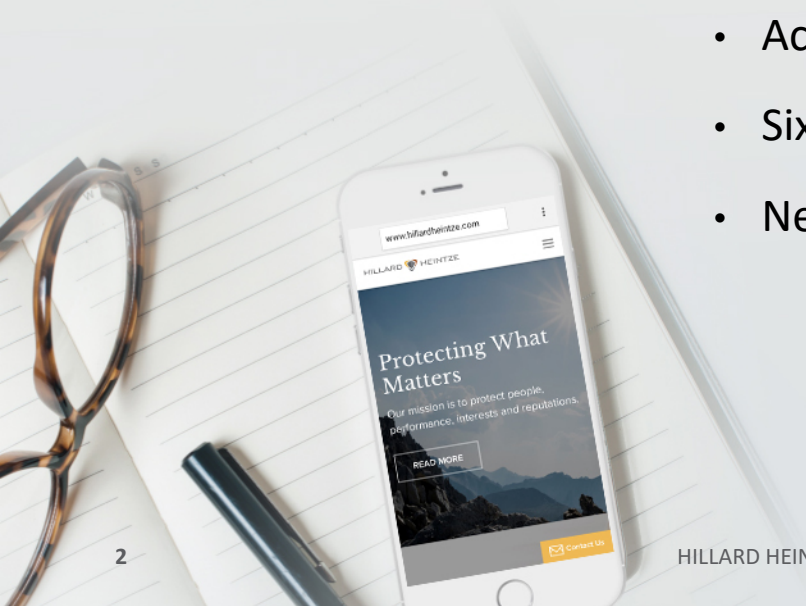
An Independent Review of the Tragic Events of May 31, 2019

November 13, 2019

HILLARD  HEINTZE
A JENSEN HUGHES COMPANY

AGENDA

- Overview of Assignment
- Actions Taken
- Six Key Findings
- Nearly Sixty Recommendations





OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT

What You Asked Us to Do

- Conduct independent review, in conformity with Resolution
- Ensure transparency, independence and public trust in the results
- Create timeline as well as employment history and workplace interactions
- Review relevant City policies, procedures and practices
- Address, at minimum, facility security, workplace violence prevention and employee alerting and response to active shooter notifications



What We Did

- **On-site Presence:** Continuous from July 22 to November 4
- **Direct Engagement:** 230 interviews and group discussions
- **Two Surveys:** Entire workforce + Building 2 employees
- **Listening Sessions:** Employees (2) and Community (2)
- **Families:** Met with 10 of 12; reached out multiple times
- **Timeline:** Development and validation
- **Building 2:** Physical assessment and walk-through
- **Review:** Policies, reports, evidence and electronic records
- **Data Analysis:** 335,000 emails and 6,500 documents
- **Open Source Analysis:** Social media and public records
- **Threat Assessment:** Retrospective review of subject



Our Delivery

Team of 18 subject-matter experts

- HR professionals
- Forensic psychologist
- Attorneys
- Law enforcement experts
- Threat and violence risk management experts

**Overarching goal:
To help prevent
another tragedy
in Virginia Beach**

**58 recommendations on how to advance a holistic
approach to workplace violence prevention**



KEY FINDING #1

Heroic Action

The City of Virginia Beach employees, police and first responders acted courageously in the face of life-threatening danger, and their actions prevented further casualties.

- Building 2 employees and attempts to protect others
- VBPD and its effective response
- VBFD and Emergency Medical Services





The Attacker

The attacker did not display warning signs or prohibited behaviors associated with a pathway to violence that could have provided the City of Virginia Beach or expert threat assessors with an opportunity to intervene ahead of the violence on May 31, 2019.

- Actions, behaviors and communications did not in themselves demonstrate many known pre-incident risk factors for targeted workplace violence
- Our review identified previously unknown risk factors such as: multiple weapons purchases, body armor, further isolation from others – but did not rise to an elevated level of risk that would have:
 1. Warranted intervention OR
 2. Provided a definitive motive for the attack

KEY FINDING #2

The Attacker

- No evidence the subject communicated his violent intentions to others before the attack
- No “leakage warning behaviors”
- May have been interested in past mass-casualty and active shooter attacks – but evidence is not conclusive and only available retrospectively
- Legally acquired firearms in prior three years
- No known history of mental health care or treatment
- No clear evidence of a plan or “manifesto”
- Challenges in work performance since 2016



KEY FINDING #3

Workplace Violence Prevention

To nurture a new culture of workplace safety, the City needs to establish a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program.

- City's pre-attack commitment to workplace violence prevention was limited
- Need to:
 - Implement training for specific internal audiences
 - Draft policies and procedures to prioritize reporting and early identification of warning behaviors
 - Establish behavioral threat assessment capability
 - Consider creating a Threat Assessment Team

KEY FINDING #4

The City HR Department

The City needs to centralize its HR function in order to improve engagement with employees at unit-level – where HR issues originate.

Need to focus on:

- Roles and reporting channels
- Alignment of duties between unit-level HR liaisons and City HR
- Policies and protocols
- Data management
- Training





KEY FINDING #4

The City HR Department

Establish a prevention-focused approach to employee issues. Needs to include:

- Development of a central database of employee performance and workplace complaints
- Utilization of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Establishment of a Public Advocate's Office as an independent channel for employee issues



KEY FINDING #5

Critical Incident Response

Improvements in the City's critical incident response protocols are warranted in areas such as mass-notification alerting, continuous improvement, first responder communications and all-hazards response planning.

- Mass communications capabilities on May 31, 2019 were limited.
- City's critical incident response protocols were not fully followed.
- The role and function of the City's main communications center are not clearly established.

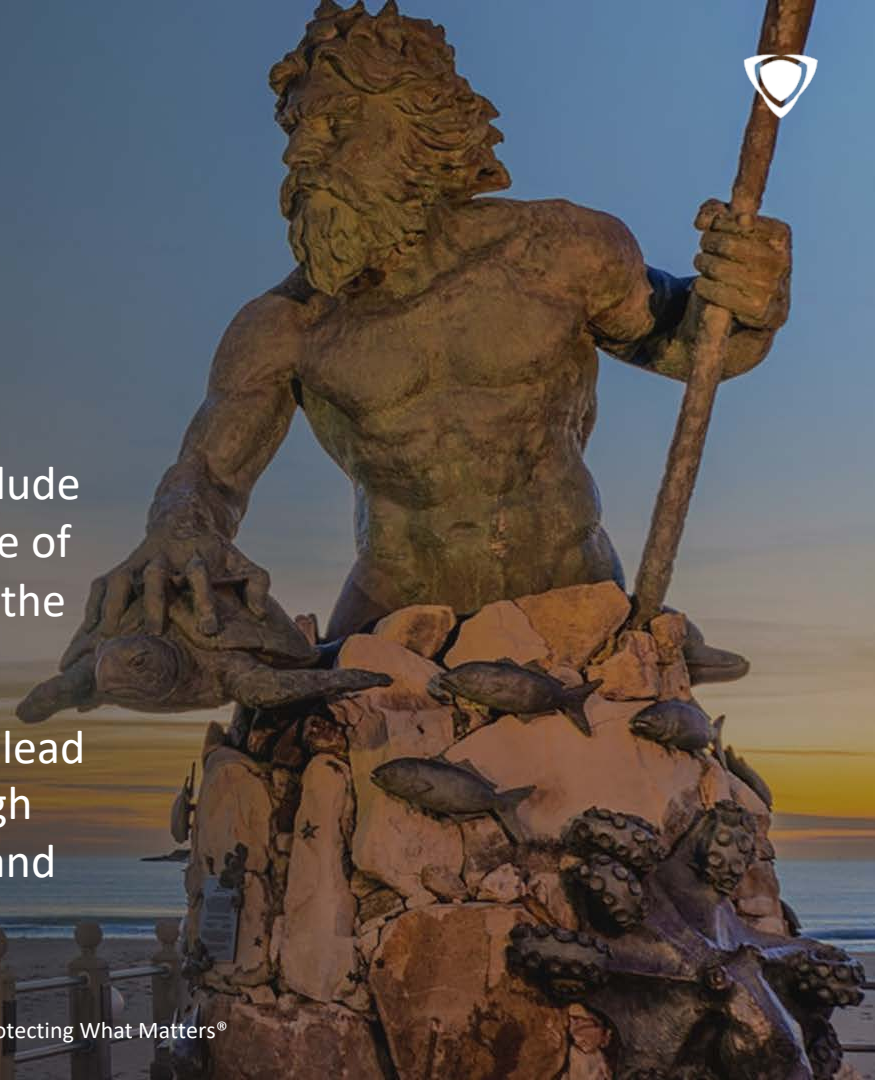


KEY FINDING #5

Critical Incident Response

Additional areas needing attention

- Expansion of City's training approach to include key post-response issues and ensure a range of training exercises that test response across the spectrum of City services.
- Designation and provision of authority to a lead agency for formal tasking and follow-through regarding issues identified in after-actions and reviews of training exercises.





KEY FINDING #6

Physical and Technical Security

Physical and technical security improvements are available to help the City advance workplace violence prevention.

- No single City department or individual responsible for overall physical and technical security.
- Evacuation plans are not sufficiently tested nor consistent among units within the same building.
- First responders did not have access to critical areas in Building 2.
- City does not have a robust camera network that provides visibility across the municipal campus.

Recommended Focus:

An enterprise-wide physical and technical security plan, with a formal minimum-security standard for all City-owned or operated buildings



RECOMMENDATIONS

VBPD's Actions On Scene

- Policies and procedures
- Checklists for communications personnel
- Tactical and operational radio channels
- Notification procedures
- Managing incoming information during critical incidents
- Facilitating first responder access

Multi-Agency Coordination, Command and Controls

- Roles and responsibilities
- Emergency Operations Center plan
- Emergency mass notification messaging
- Unified command
- Scene processing
- Case management
- Family reunification center procedures
- Post-incident investigations support
- Support services for first responders



RECOMMENDATIONS

Physical and Technical Security

- Minimum security and technology standards
- 24-hour monitoring
- Numbered entryways and doorways
- Security technology systems
- Go-bags and Knox Boxes
- Access control systems
- Panic or emergency alert buttons



RECOMMENDATIONS

HR Support

- Single chain of command reporting directly to HR
- Hiring standards
- Background investigations
- Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook
- Performance evaluations
- Professional HR support for managers
- Supervisory HR training
- Employee investigations protocols
- Centralized personnel record database
- Employee Assistance Program
- Termination practices



RECOMMENDATIONS

Workplace Violence Prevention

- Leadership support for workplace violence prevention
- HR focus on early intervention and identification
- Workplace violence prevention training for employees
- Workplace violence prevention training for managers and supervisors
- Employee reporting protocols
- HR management of workplace violence prevention procedures, protocols and investigations
- Threat Assessment Team
- EAP threat reporting guidelines

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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